



TONI N. HARP
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



ROBIN TOUSEY-AYERS
Chairperson

Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes

City Hall 2nd Meeting Room II

May 9, 2016

- Present: Jenifer Blemings, Sally Esposito, Benjamin Nadolsky, Tricia Palluzzi, Matthew Ranelli, and Robin Tousey-Ayers
- Staff: Michelle Duprey and Paula Pernal
- Absent: Sara Hungerford, Kurtis Kearney, Iva Long, Maria Rivera, Lisa Spruill-Stevenson, and Jack Tsai
- Guests: Melissa Manzione, Teacher at Engineering & Science University Magnet School in Hamden
- Students: Tiana Walker
Mikayla Osumah
Samir Mahmud
Nick Martino
Alexcino Figueroa

Meeting called to order at 5:25 p.m.

Guests/New Business

Tricia moved the motion to have the Guests conduct their presentation prior to the Regular Commission Meeting. Jenifer seconded the motion. The motion to have the guests conduct their presentation prior to the regular Commission meeting was approved.

The Students at Engineering & Science University Magnet School in Hamden introduce themselves to the Commission and stated that they have developed a Paratransit App titled "MT4D". They begin discussing their app with a presentation entitled, "The Future of the Connecticut Paratransit System". Tiana Walker & Mikayla Osumah distributed the article from the CT Magazine praising their App and Group. Tiana & Mikayla stated that MT4D is a fixed rate travel system. The user must first apply for an account and must telephone and book an appointment 30 minutes in advance. MT4D has the following features: AVL=Automated Vehicle Locator, MDT=Mobile Data Terminals, IVR=Interactive Voice Response, and it uses Trapeze=Booking Software.

Tiana & Mikayla stated that the current issues with MT4D are the wait times, trip denials, changes after hours, changes in schedule by agency, vehicles arriving after scheduled pick-up times, and uncertainty of ride duration. The most important feature of the MT4D app is the power to control the destination by the user.

Tiana & Mikayla stated that the top 5 requests from paratransit users are:

1. Review & Confirm reservation
2. Making Changes to Reservation
3. View Confirmed Reservations
4. Enter Destination location
5. Track the Paratransit Vehicle in Real Time

The students stated that the Strengths & Opportunities of the MT4D app consist of the following:

1. Less no shows
2. Upgraded to 21st Century
3. Confirmation emails/Less errors
4. Visual platforms/Open market & free of charges & faster response time
5. Minimal engineering coding on front/back end-easier to use
6. Available to sight & hearing impaired
7. Real time GPS
8. Text & push notifications
9. Data transferred directly to Transit Authority/App offered Statewide
10. More users

The students also stated that the Weakness/Threats of the MT4D app consist of the following:

1. Multiple Bookings used by Transit Authorities
2. Multiple States working on similar app
3. Not all current paratransit users online
4. Convince CTDOT that app can work across the State
5. Municipal/State red tape
6. Additional staff needed to code app
7. Learning curve for TA
8. Learning curve for Paratransit users

Tiana Walker & Mikayla Osumah stated that First Transit is their only competitor-as a versatile mobile app.

Samir Mahmud and Nick Martino stated that they are responsible for the coding and web design of MT4D. Samir & Nick distribute several iPads to the Commission members and demonstrate how the app actually works. After the demonstration, Samir asks the commission members for any suggestions. Jenifer mentioned that it would be great to add another destination to the app should a user wish to make a stop along the route. Matt

mentioned that it would be beneficially to add favorites so that the user would not have to re-enter the same information for repeat destinations. These suggestions were well received by the students.

Tiana & Mikayla stated that the next steps include meeting with The University of New Haven regarding assisting with coding, seeking \$11,000 in funding, collaborating with others, applying for 501c(3) status, and applying for grant funds.

Melissa Manzione, the teacher of these students at the Engineering & Science university Magnet School explained that the app began as a class assignment and grew into something must bigger for each of the students. Ms. Manzione stated that the students have been in magazines; they have won awards; and they have presented before the CTDOT. All of the Commission members were impressed with the students. Michelle suggested that the students look into WOW, the accessible dispatch in Manhattan run out of West Haven. Michelle also stated that CTDOT can require that all paratransit service providers provide funding. Matt stated that he will provide a support letter from the Commission to be included in the students' grant package. Matt mentioned that CTDOT is probably not in compliance with its contract with the paratransit service providers, and the students should look into this. Michelle stated that the Commission can write to CTDOT Commissioner & other Disability groups on behalf of the students. Robin gave Ms. Manzione several contact names of Disability rights individuals.

The contact information for MT4D is as follows:

Melissa Manzione, Teacher-Engineering & Science University Magnet School
130B Leeder Hill Road, Hamden, CT 06517
203-946-6610 p 203-946-8440 f
Melissa.manzione@new-haven.k12.ct.us
203-400-0988 c
Web-mt4dapp.com

Minutes

The Commission members reviewed the April Minutes. Robin stated that both Kurtis and Iva arrived late to the April meeting and, therefore, should be moved to the "present" section of the minutes. Sally stated that is a typographical error to Alder Ernie Santiago's name on page two, paragraph two of the minutes and, it was Ald. Santiago who was not aware if the building owners group met in City Hall. Both Robin and Sally stated that Kurtis made a motion to adjourn the April meeting and Iva seconded the motion to adjourn the April meeting. Sally moved to approve the April Minutes and Tricia seconded. The April Minutes were approved as amended.

Chairperson's Report

The Chairperson's Report was tabled for the next meeting.

Department Report

None.

Old Business

1. May 12th BOA Joint Committee Meeting on the Elevator Issue/Ordinance

Matt stated that he met with Alder Ernie Santiago and Alder Santiago had the following questions:

a. How often does this occur?

Matt stated that he informed Alder Santiago that there are no numeric statistics but repeat issues. While Matt was with Alder Santiago, one of the Fire Commissioners walked in and mentioned that calls with these issues are common but not logged in.

b. How will this be enforced?

Matt stated that LCI will be enforcing the new parts of the Elevator Ordinance as part of Section 12 ½-47 of the existing ordinance. He stated that the Commission is not creating a new enforcement agency.

Alder Ernie Santiago asked Matt if the Commission would be willing to meet with the Building owners group to discuss this matter. Matt volunteered on behalf of the Commission.

2. Yale New Haven Hospital ("YNHH") Accessibility Website/Bed Management

Sally researched the websites of both Mass General Hospital and YNHH. She discovered that the website for Mass General revealed information about Accessibility immediately, while YNHH had no information about Accessibility other than a training document for OR Schedulers imbedded in their website. Michelle stated that she will follow-up with YNHH regarding bed-management and website sometime in the fall. Robin suggested contacting YNHH early-perhaps in June. Michelle suggested that Sally send another email requesting more detailed information from Mass General. Robin reminded the Commission members that YNHH told them to meet with the Admission staff.

Sally distributes a pamphlet from the Community Alliance for Research and Engagement ("CARE"), a partnership between New Haven Community and Yale School of Public Health concerning chronic diseases and health survey conducted in 2015.

3. Office of Protection and Advocacy Update

Robin stated that the Office of Protection and Advocacy will likely be disbanded.

4. Long Wharf Theater

Sally stated that if any Commission member would like tickets to the Long Wharf Theatre, please see her.

Other Business

Ben mentioned that he will be interning this summer with Bob Corcoran and with low-income students in Washington, D.C.

Public Comment/Announcements

Next meeting shall take place on June 11, 2016.

The September meeting shall take place on Thursday, September 15, 2016 at 5:15 p.m. at the Fair Haven Library. Notice will be given in advance to all Commission Member, Town Clerk & the Public.

Robin made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Sally seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 7:00 p.m.