



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

**COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES**  
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**DAVID HICKS**  
*Chairperson*

**Commission on Disabilities Minutes**  
City Hall 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room  
**January 9, 2012**

Present: Cecile Brodsky, Dana Canevari, David Hicks, Matthew Ranelli, Jack Tsai

Excused Absence: Jason Gomez

Staff: Michelle Duprey, Paula Pernal

**Discussion of December Minutes Before Quorum**

Jack asked for a clarification of the Personal Care Assistant Advisory Council since he missed the December meeting.

Michelle stated that the Governor enacted an Executive Order to establish the workforce Personal Care Assistant Council. Based on the Executive Order, delineates who shall be included in the list assembled of state-paid Personal Care Assistants and their names shall be released to labor unions for potential organizations. It is very controversial because it involves people with disabilities and Personal Care Assistant. David asks about the intersection between the workers and the union. Michelle responds that there is no intersection at this time. Kathy Ludlow is their greatest opponent. There was previous legislation opposing this. Kathy is leading the charge against it. The State of Connecticut will release the names of the Personal Care Assistants within the next couple of weeks to the unions. This includes 8500 names of Personal Care Assistant that meet the definition under the Executive Order which is very broad.

Cecile asked David if he received the New York Times article relating to the Personal Care Assistant Council. Cecile stated that she is conflicted with the article. She said that Personal Care Assistants should be paid a least overtime for their jobs. Michelle stated that these individual are only paid for state-funded jobs. Dana stated that the article is slanted and the politicians really want this legislation. Dana stated that she is no longer conflicted after the Governor signed the Executive Order.

Michelle reaffirmed that the Executive Order is only binding on individuals who are not currently members of the unions who perform Personal Care Assistant work or non-union employed by visiting nurses.

Michelle stated that according to the Executive Order and list, there are 3 prongs in which an individual may qualify as a Personal Care Assistant: provide direct care; maintain independence in the home; and, provide safe access to the community. Upon reviewing the State Waiver Program, Michelle discovered that there were individuals that provided just transportation but that were not Personal Care Assistants. This is controversial because of the way that the Executive Order was drafted. The number of Personal Care Assistants on the list increased as a result of including these individuals.

Michelle stated that letters will go out to the individuals by the unions that provide Personal Care Assistant service. At some point, the unions will have to go back to the legislature for approval. There may be a lack of legislative support next session due to a larger opposition.

Michelle mentioned that Patty Clay is working with her on this matter. There is also an Elder Advocate Healthcare Advocate. The DSS Commissioner and Dawn Lambert from DSS are working with them. It is a small group.

There are also well-attended Public Meetings.

David stated that there is a lot of information on-line.

Matthew arrived at 5:50 p.m. and made a quorum.  
Meeting was called to order at 5:38 p.m.

David made a motion to accept the December minutes as modified.  
Dana seconded the motion.  
December minutes approved unanimously as modified.

### **Chairman's Report**

David stated that we are in a short legislative session that occurs every other year.

David mentioned the Mayor's letter to DOT. He hoped that it would encourage a strong reaction. Michelle stated that Commissioner Redeker sent out letters acknowledging receipt of the letter and thanking the Mayor for the letter. Michelle mentioned that she sent a copy of the letter to Don DeFronzo who is newly appointed ADA Coordinator for the DOT. Michelle stated she received a response from Don DeFronzo who forwarded it to Jeff Beckam. David asked if New Haven solicits support from other cities. Michelle stated that New Haven has contacted the Social Services offices of area cities and towns such as Hartford and Bridgeport for support.

Matthew asked Michelle if she or David had forwarded the article in New York Times concerning an ADA lawsuit in New York on the decision of the implementation of the taxi-cab plan. David responded that he forwarded this article to Matthew. Matthew asked Michelle if she forwarded this decision to Jeff Beckam. Michelle responded that she forwarded a copy of the letter along with this case and the Motion for Summary Judgment to Jeff Beckam.

Michelle stated that the taxi-cab companies have appealed the DOT decision. The taxi-cab companies are looking for the support of the disability community in the amicus briefs. Michelle stated a decision is expected by the end of February.

David asked if anyone had any contact with Commissioner William Long. Jack responded that he has not seen him in awhile. David questioned Michelle about the reason for the return of mail. Michelle will check.

### **Department Report**

Michelle stated Elaine Quinn's term permanently expires in February 2012. Dana asked if she may volunteer to take a leave of absence. Michelle informed her that she may resign. Michelle stated that Dana has a 3-year appointment. Michelle stated that Jason Gomez will not be returning to the Commission. Matthew, David & Dana discuss whether Jason is an active commissioner. Michelle stated that she checked with the Mayor's office concerning this matter. Michelle said that Jason must submit a

resignation letter and until Jason does so, he shall be counted towards the quorum. Dana asked Michelle to explain why she has one more year left on her term. Michelle stated that a Commissioner may be appointed for 3 full individual terms. Michelle told Dana that she was appointed to complete someone's term and then Dana was appointed for 3 full individual terms. David stated that a Commissioner may actually serve 11 years. Dana decided to remain on the Commission.

### **Old Business**

David stated that the Commission must elect its Officers. David mentioned that it is helpful to the Commission to have the position of Secretary filled in order to review the Minutes before they are mailed to the Commissioners. David asked for volunteers. David asked Michelle what would occur if no one volunteered. Michelle stated that she would have to review *Roberts Rules of Order* and get back to the Commission. Michelle suggested not filling this position in anticipation that Robin might be interested in this position. Matthew offered to volunteer as Interim Secretary until Robin arrives if she wishes to volunteer for the position. David stated the he would remain as Chairman, Dana would remain as Vice Chairman, and Matthew would volunteer as the new position Secretary.

David made a motion Elect the Officers for 2012 as noted above.

Jack seconded the motion.

The Election of Officers for 2012 was accepted unanimously.

### **New Business**

Matthew mentioned that on January 24, 2012, the Governor is having An Evening for the Deaf & Hearing Impaired. Matthew stated that this is basically to create an advocacy agenda. Matthew stated that he provide David will all the information.

Matthew stated that the Commission on the Deaf & Hearing Impaired was folded into an agency. It has its first meeting soon and Matthew will report back at the next meeting. Matthew stated that formerly there are 17 or 18 members with an Executive Director. Matthew will forward the information to David for circulation.

### **Other Business**

None

### **Public Comment/Announcements**

None

Dana made motion to adjourn meeting.

David seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn approved unanimously at 6:13 p.m.