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COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
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DAVID HICKS
Chairperson

Commission on Disabilities Minutes
 City Hall 4th Floor Conference Room
October 15, 2012

- Present: Cecile Brodsky, Dana Canevari, David Hicks, Matthew Ranelli, Robin Tousey-Ayers, Jack Tsai
- Excused Absence: None
- Staff: Michelle Duprey, Paula Pernal
- Guest: None

Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Minutes

David asked the commission members to review the September minutes.
 David asked the commission members if they wish to make any amendments to the September minutes. There were no changes.
 Robin made a motion to accept the September minutes.
 David seconded the motion.
 September minutes approved unanimously.

Chairman's Report

David distributes a letter from Jorge L. Perez, the President of the New Haven Board of Aldermen. This letter is in response to David's letter to the Board of Aldermen concerning the Jobs Pipeline Working Group. Robin stated that Mr. Perez does not specify in his letter how the Board of Directors is formed. David stated that there is some information on this in the document. David stated that they enumerate the composition of the Board of Directors. David will forward Robin a copy. David stated that Mr. Perez could have stated in his letter that they will consider someone with a disability. David stated that he does not find the distinction to race, class, gender, ethnicity, status, sexual orientation to be pertinent to a disability because individuals with disabilities inhabit all of these divisions. David suggested that the Commission respond to Mr. Perez's letter. David asks the other commission members for their opinions and suggestions. Dana recalls there was a previous discussion or a letter stating that the Board of Directors will specifically target the youth. Dana suggested that the response of the Commission should state that not looking at the needs of the disabled, since they comprise of such a large population, is a disservice to the City and causes the Jobs Pipeline to be inherently ineffective. Jack asked David if the organizations that have a seat on the Board of Directors have been selected. David stated that if the Board of Directors does not select an individual with a disability, they are cutting out a large amount of the population in New Haven. Michelle states that the disabled population in New Haven is 25.7%. David stated that this might be a discrimination issue, but he does not wish to go that route yet. David stated that he thought more than one response would be required. David stated that the whole

employment issue is big problem in the City and the Commission should make sure that the disability community is not left out if they do not get someone on the Board of Directors. Dana mentioned that the Board of Directors might wish to look at this differently. Robin stated that Mr. Perez underscores unemployed and underemployed in his letter. Robin mentioned that the Commission could address these issues with the data and percentages on unemployment and individuals with disabilities. Robin also stated it is Disability Employment Month. Robin asked about the make-up of the organizations. David stated that each organization will more than likely decide the composition of their own choice which will make it that much harder for an individual with a disability to become a representative. Robin asked who is in control of the Jobs Pipeline Working Group. David suggested reviewing the document again to make sure that the Commission understands the principles of the Jobs Pipeline Working Group. David suggested that someone should come to the next Commission meeting to explain how the disability community will be represented in the Jobs Pipeline Working Group. David will forward Robin the document again. Dana mentioned that the letter targets certain groups. David mentioned that the Board of Directors is targeting different employers which mean that there is individual who is communicating with the City that could meet with the Commission. Robin reads from an article in the New Haven Independent on October 13, 2012 about the Jobs Pipeline Working Group. David asks how the writer of the article comes up with 6400 unemployed individuals. No one knows. David asks Robin to email the link to everyone.

David mentions that his Alderman, Sal DeCola, held a neighborhood meeting in Nathan Hale School. David stated that he had a conversation with Sal DeCola about his problems driving his scooter on the local street while people were occupying the sidewalk.

David stated that there is a webinar of the Cornell & Industrial Labor Relations School on October 26, 2012 between 12:00 & 12:30 p.m. targeting veterans looking for employment if anyone is interested.

Department Report

Michelle distributed flash drives containing the training materials and regulations that she conducted on the ADA standards of the new DOJ Construction Renovation Guidelines. Michelle mentioned that the materials are voluminous. Michelle stated that approximately 25 individuals attended.

Michelle mentioned that she was appointed to the Governor's PCA Advisory Council. However, since the Governor's PCA Advisory Council has been eliminated, Michelle is no longer on the panel. David asked Michelle if the new Congressional Board compromise of the same consumers.

Michelle stated that it did not. Michelle stated that she has not heard back with regard to the PCA care in general.

Michelle asked Jack if he was aware of that the VA issued a statement no longer paying for service dogs for patients with PTSD. Jack was not aware of this statement.

Michelle asked Dana about the candidates. Dana did not attend. It was in Manchester.

Old Business

David states that Robin was working with Mary Lane at Transition Services at Wilbur Cross High School to put a panel together for an event during Disabilities Awareness Month. Dana stated that she would not be able to attend the event. Robin distributes the press release of the movie, "Music Within". Robin asks Jack if a young person from the VA could speak on the panel. Robin states that the movie and panel discussion will take place on October 24, 2012 between 9:00 a.m. -11:30 a.m. at Wilbur Cross High School. Robin informs the Commission that she has been discussing the movie with Mary Lane and Mary Lane will send out permission slips to the parents of the students at Wilbur Cross High School. The Commission members discuss the rating of the movie and other alternate movies such as: Door-to-

Door; The Untouchables; The Other Side of the Mountain; and Soul Surfer. Matthew and Robin will view the movie "Music Within" for appropriateness, particularly the possibility of nudity. Michelle asks if there are any students and teachers with disabilities. Robin states that there are several students with disabilities, but she does not know about the teachers. Michelle suggests Heidi Forest as a panelist. Michelle states that Heidi is deaf and works at BRS. Robin asks Michelle if she would be a panelist. Michelle said that she would be a panelist. David asks about Therese Nadeau. Michelle states that she originally recommended Therese Nadeau as the moderator. Robin asks Michelle for the email of Therese Nadeau. Robin states that the Commission should not have too many panelists. Robin mentions that Mary Lane probably has not seen the movie "Music Within". Matthew states that the reason for the rating is profound profanity. Matthew states that there is no mention of nudity. Michelle suggests that a parent watch the movie "Music Within". Matthew agrees to watch the movie. Robin states that she and Mary agreed that this would be a good pilot to see the results. Robin would like a few minutes to speak about health and insurance because this topic always gets left out. David confirms that Matthew will watch the movie "Music Within".

David states that the Commission must vote on a slate. Robin states that she was the Vice Chair prior to Dana. Robin states that last month the Commission discussed about Cecile coming in as Vice Chair. After a discussion, Cecile volunteers to become Vice Chair. David states a vote will be taken at the November meeting of the following slate: David Hicks, Chair; Cecile Brodsky, Vice Chair; and Matthew Ranelli, Secretary.

Robin states that there is a movie broadcasted on the Turner Movie Channel every Tuesday targeted to the disability community.

New Business

None

Other Business

None

Public Comment/Announcements

None

Dana made a motion to adjourn meeting.

David seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn approved unanimously at 6:27 p.m.