

City of Duluth
Commission on Disabilities
Meeting Minutes
February 6, 2013

Melissa Booth	P	Amber Madoll	P
Clara Borrell	A	Francis McGee	A
Roberta Cich	P	Beverly Strongitharm	E
Erica Erickson	P	Karin Swor	E
Sister Mary Carla Flood	P	Randall Vogt	E
Derek Uttley	P	Ray Kleveter	E
Gerald Salvesson	P	Bob Grytdahl-Staff	P

Guests: Jade Seelye, intern for the Community Development Office, UMD MSW student
Roll Call

1. Approval of December/January Minutes & Current Agenda

Roberta Cich motioned to approve the December and January minutes and current agenda. Sister Mary Carla seconded the motion. Minutes approved as written and current agenda approved.

2. Action and Advocacy Reports

- a. Taxi Task Force - Surveys are being finalized. Chris Becker from Cummings Mobility joined the task force. The next step will be meeting with the taxi drivers. Roberta Cich will call Kim McKay. The next taxi task force meeting is scheduled for March 20th.
- b. Accessibility Code - The city is working on language, how to seek a sign interpreter. Ask Pact-TV for cost of closed captions. Roberta Cich suggested assistive technology such as pocket talkers and FM receivers so people can listen on the radio.

Bob Grytdahl reported that the building official is responsible to do assessment of all city services. Bob is still working on who is enforcing the code. Currently the Department of Justice is the point of contact until we have clarification.

Roberta inquired if the Greater Duluth Council plans to check with the Commission again regarding signage to indicate an area is not accessible via wheelchair. Bob will look into this again. Roberta is willing to check for recommendations from other agencies on how to label something as not accessible to wheelchairs, and will email whatever she is able to find out.

- c. Parks and Recreation - Erica Erickson reported there are plans to re-do the restrooms and Enger Tower to make them accessible. Currently there is no plumbing in the winter time at Ordean/East parks because of the expense. They are working on accessible porta-potties and surveillance cameras in some of the parks. Some of the video feed goes directly to the police, some of the surveillance can be viewed later. Vandalism in park restrooms is an issue and costs the city \$60,000 a year to cover spray paint vandalism. This does not include the cost to repair other forms of vandalism

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3. Strategic Planning 2013

The Commission discussed our 2013 plans, which are similar to last year's, including media contacts, advocacy, and conferences to get our message out (Health and Human Service Conference, Age and Disability Conference, ARRMS Conference). It was also suggested that mental health be addressed in our planning. More specifically, how gun violence affects mental illness, and the stigma associated with mental illness. People who suffer from mental illness are more likely to be victims of crime, not the other way around. A specific strategic planning goal would be: letters to the editor to raise awareness of current issues (mental illness and the stigma that goes with it).

Other notes about mental illness: 75% of gunshot deaths are suicide. There were 400 gunshot deaths in Minnesota in the past year. Erica Erickson shared that there are more deaths from medical mistakes than from gunshots.

Derek Uttley reported that the VA (Veteran's Administration) is under fire for requiring veterans with PTSD to be on a no firearms list. Is this a HIPPA violation?

May is mental health awareness month. Commissioner's assignment for the next meeting is to bring some research to the meeting to share in order to educate the public.

There was discussion of person first language. Amber Madoll volunteered to call her contact from the Duluth Budgeteer to invite a reporter to write a piece on person first language; how gun issues affect people with mental illness.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Other Business

- a. Melissa Booth will prepare a rough draft of the year-end report for the Commission to present to the City Council.
- b. Roberta Cich brought to our attention that the governor signed an executive order to create a sub-cabinet in order to develop an Olmstead Plan, with Yvonne Prettnner-Solon. A 1999 Supreme Court Ruling- Olmstead- said that people with disabilities should not live in institutions if they have the ability to live more independently.

Sister Mary Carla Flood talked about the Eden Plan, which is trying to de-institutionalize nursing homes. This includes allowing residents to have pets and be involved in the day to day operations of where they live.

- c. The National Sheriff's Association reports that more people with mental health issues are ending up in jails.
- d. RobertaCich and Amber Madoll both reported that they have invited people to apply to the Commission.

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6. Announcements

There were no announcements.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Booth
Secretary

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