

City of Duluth
Commission on Disabilities
Monthly Meeting
March 7, 2012

Corrected Copy

Melissa Booth	P	Lars Kuehnow	P
Clara Borrell	A	Francis McGee	A
Roberta Cich	A	Beverly Strongitharm	P
Erica Erickson	P	Karin Swor	P
Lindsey Harkreader	E	Glenn Tridgell	P
Sara Junge	P	Randall Vogt	P
Durbin Keeney	A	Bob Grytdahl-Staff	P

Roll Call- Also present: Gerald Salveson, Sister Mary Carla Flood, Diane Naus

1. Approval of February Minutes/Current Agenda

Glenn Tridgell motioned to approve the minutes with a second by Karin Swor. Minutes approved as written.

Lars Kuehnow motioned to approve the agenda. Karin Swor seconded the motion. Agenda approved as written.

2. Presentation by Dianne E. Naus, Advocate, MN Disability Law Center

The Minnesota Disability Law Center provides free civil services to people with disabilities and provides representation on certain issues. Dianne talked about the rights of persons with disabilities to vote, including access to polling places, the right to register to vote, the right to accessible ballots, and the right to fair treatment by poll workers. The Minnesota Disability Law Center does not support the voter identification requirement which requires a picture ID in order to vote. Dianne pointed out several reasons why the voter identification requirement is not necessary:

- A. It is costly.
- B. There is no established need for it. There are no cases of voter impersonation.
- C. Our current process has been tested and is successful.
- D. We currently have a good voter turnout. Requiring a picture ID would disenfranchise voters.

If anyone is having difficulty accessing polls, voters can call the Disability Law Center for assistance. Dianne provided handouts, including a handout that answered questions such as how to register to vote, how to vote if health issues prevent a person from getting to the polls, what to do if there is no physical access to your polling place, what to do if a person needs a ride to the polling place, how to get help reading and marking a ballot, what to do if you have been challenged at the polling place, and how to curbside vote.

3. Correspondence

Lars Kuehnow brought in correspondence he received from a citizen regarding accessible parking issues at City Hall, the courthouse, and the government services center.

Bob Grytdahl recommends doing an assessment with a couple of commission members.

Beverly Strongitharm and guest, Gerald Salveson, volunteered to go with Bob on this assignment.

The correspondence that Lars provided also talked about the lack of transportation options for people with disabilities. Accessible vans are not affordable for most taxi companies. Bob mentioned there are options out there for other agencies to purchase accessible vans and lease them to cab companies. Bev mentioned that People with Disabilities for Change is organizing a fundraiser with Custom Cab to help them raise money to purchase another accessible van.

4. Signage Requests

A. Radford Tucker – 22 N. 63rd Ave. W. – Melissa Booth met with the Tuckers to discuss their signage request at 63rd Avenue West, and recommended approval of the request. *Beverly Strongitharm motioned to approve the signage request. Karin Swor seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

B. Bob Grytdahl met with the owner at Twin Ports Collision after a complaint was received from the owner about an accessible parking space at 18th Avenue West and First Street. The business owner said that the accessible spot is not used enough and poses a hassle for their business. He also talked with the homeowner and the city engineer about the signage. Commission discussion continued regarding our role with approving and assessing signage requests.

5. Year End Report Draft

Glenn Tridgell made a motion to send the report to Julie Mockler for final distribution.

Beverly Strongitharm seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Action and Advocacy Reports

A. Tourism Committee -- Randy Vogt provided a detailed report on print publication issues and a meeting with the Mayor about “outdoor” concerns for people with disabilities. We will discuss this report more next month.

b. Parks and Recreation -- The rubber surface at the Playfront swings does meet ADA guidelines. The ADA guidelines state that the surface needs enough bounce to protect from falls. This raises the issue of what is in compliance with the law vs. what would increase accessibility.

c. Communicating with Business community – BobGrytdahl is now part of a group in city hall working as ADA advisors. The group consists of Bob, the city architect, and

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someone from the city attorney's office. They have participated in continuing education regarding ADA guidelines and will work to address ADA challenges in the city. Bob plans to meet with the group to address potential accessibility issues with a funeral home in the West End.

- d. Alternate meeting site ideas -- Beverly Strongitharm reported that the Radisson would provide a meeting room free of charge. There is plenty of parking and it's on the bus route. She will call and set up next month's meeting for April.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8. Other Business

- A. Erica Erickson suggested adding to next month's agenda discussion about a Commission statement on the voter identification law.
- B. Bob would like welcoming of new commissioners added to next month's agenda, and have an "orientation" for new commissioners.

9. Announcements

The March commission meeting was Glenn's last official meeting as a commissioner. Thank-you, Glenn, for all the time and effort you gave to the commission!

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Booth
Secretary

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