COLUMBIA DISABILITIES COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 14, 2013

Board Meeting Room, Chamber of Commerce Building, 300 S. Providence Rd.

1. Called to order by Chair, Homer Page, at 3:00 p.m.

2. Introductions:

Members: Christy Brookins, Marcie Luebbert, Hazel Fields, Homer Page, Mike Peplow, Sean Spence, Kathleen Weinschenk, Lisa Zanetti and Dawn Zeterberg

Excused Absence: Lee Henson, Cheryl Price, Dovie Weston

Unexcused Absence:

Staff and Other Attendees:

Heather Cole, City Manager's Office Richard Stone, Traffic Engineer Several journalism students were in attendance.

3. Additions to Agenda

None.

4. Review and Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Spence made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2013 meeting as written, Mr. Peplow seconded. All in favor; motion approved.

Mr. Peplow made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 25, 2013 meeting as written, Ms. Zeterberg seconded. All in favor; motion approved.

5. New Business

Report on City Council Response to Commission Request on the Use of Surplus Funds

Mr. Page noted that he went to the City Council meeting on March 4th when the Commission's report went to Council. They discussed the report and recommendations made by the Commission; they discussed the report at length and Council is looking at all the suggestions for the disbursement of funds. Mr. Spence advised that he had spoken with most of the Council members over the past ten days and felt confident that the \$950,000 would go back into the budget for city funds and a portion to the Blind Boone Home. He explained that the Commission had gotten their voices heard and got their needs out to Council for future consideration.

Mr. Stone suggested creating an Ad Hoc Committee to discuss audible signal locations. Mr. Page explained that at the February 25th meeting this was addressed and the group felt that the work being done on College between University and Rollins would be a good location for audible signals as part of the project. Providence and Broadway also came up as a suggestion at the meeting from an attendee who advised an audible signal at this location would help her as well. Mr. Stone explained that there is currently no pedestrian crossing at College and

Broadway, so that could be incorporated upon adding signals; costs estimated at \$7,800 per intersection. Mr. Page felt if there could be funding available for this, getting a committee back together would be beneficial to look at different locations. If there is no funding available, there is no sense in having another meeting. Mr. Stone explained that feedback indicated they are looking into a pilot project regardless of surplus funding availability. The previous committee consisted of Hazel Fields, Gary Wonder and Homer Page.

Ms. Weinschenk inquired about the location on College where the pedestrian was previously hit; Mr. Stone explained that this has been targeted for a fix, but is still being looked at for a long term fix. He felt confident that funding for one of the three intersections could be found; the Commission needs to agree on which intersection they would like that to be.

Upcoming candidates' forum on disabilities

Mr. Spence noted that the CoMo Disabilities Advocacy Network would be sponsoring a forum on March 21, 2013 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., at Paquin Towers. He requested the Commission provide funding for an interpreter. Ms. Weinschenk suggested putting in a call to KOPN to cover; Mr. Spence advised that that had been done and they have also reached out to the newspapers.

Mr. Peplow advised that the League of Women's Voters is also sponsoring a forum at the Regional Library on March 20th.

Ms. Weischenk made a motion to contribute funds to forum; estimated cost of \$200, Ms. Luebbert seconded.

Ms. Zanetti asked if there is a sign for the Disability Commission to post noting that they had sponsored the event; Mr. Page thought there used to be signs that were utilized at the Twilight Festival. Mr. Spence volunteered to make a sign for the Commission.

All in favor of the motion; motion approved.

Para transit future planning

Mr. Page explained that there was a proposal on the list of requests to Council to conduct a pilot project for later Para transit hours for City meetings. The Mayor was concerned about the entire Transit System including Para transit; he felt that they were spending a lot of funding and not getting much return. Seven (7) Para transit drivers at a cost of \$38 per Para transit ride. He asked staff to look into the efficiency of the Para transit service. Mr. Page questioned if the Commission wanted to get involved in looking at the costs. He felt the group should be prepared to get into that discussion since it was at the request of the Commission. Ms. Weinschenk and Ms. Luebbert supported looking into the costs. Total Para transit system costs around \$1.2 million and provides around 36,000 rides per year.

Ms. Weinschenk inquired what happens after costs are looked at and costs are shown to be too high, and wondered if people would be left without rides. Mr. Page thought that people would not be left without rides but a more efficient procedure would come as a result. He felt the group should be prepared to enter those discussions when they arise. Mr. Peplow suggested looking at comparable costs in other cities and average those numbers. He further explained that Para transit is federally mandated, so it would not be totally eliminated. If there is a public Transit system, there must be a matching Para transit program. Currently, the

system in the city is well above the federally mandated requirements. The driving force of the high cost is the disproportionately large number of citizens with disabilities that utilize the service as well as the extent of the Para transit program. Para transit is the most reliable and gets used more than others because OATS and SIL have cut their services, so many utilize the public system; it costs around \$2 per ride each way.

Mr. Spence suggested looking into a Para transit system similar to that of Phoenix, AZ; Gary Kespohl has stated this should be a model for Columbia. Ms. Zanetti stated that she could add this to her summer class as a research project for the students. Mr. Page proposed having a Transit representative attend the April meeting to discuss the issues.

Ms. Luebbert stated that Transit needs to add another line for customers to get through; the one that is currently in operation does not get through to anyone. Mr. Peplow felt that if you contact the line specific to your request someone would answer. There is also the option of emailing Para transit.

CDBG Proposal regarding ADA Transition Plan would be discussed at the next meeting since Mr. St. Romaine was not present for this meeting.

HRC Update

Mr. Page explained that Ms. Weston would not be able to attend the Human Rights Commission meetings for much longer and asked for a volunteer to attend; Ms. Zanetti volunteered. Negar Rezvani resigned her position on the HRC; there will be a new liaison sometime in April. At the last HRC meeting, she was asked again about service animal education and the Disabilities Commissions role and their interest in participating.

The HRC was requesting ideas on where the most education is needed. The Commission could ask someone to present on service animals to landlords or restaurants, etc. Deanna Noriega at SIL was suggested as a good candidate or could recommend someone else.

6. Public Comments

None.

7. Announcements

Mr. Spence advised the CoMo Disability Advocacy Group would be meeting April 4th, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., at the ARC. There will also be a column in the Missourian about disabilities.

10. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned approximately 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Cole Assistant to the City Manager