

City of Duluth
Commission on Disabilities
Monthly Meeting Minutes
October 2, 2013

Melissa Booth	E	Amber Madoll	P
Michelle McDonald	P	Francis McGee	A
Roberta Cich	A	Beverly Strongitharm	P
Erica Erickson	P	Karin Swor	E
Amanda Crosby	P	Randall Vogt	A
Derek Uttley	A	Amy Hill	P
Gerald Salveson	P	Bob Grytdahl – Staff	P

1. Approval of Minutes & Current Agenda

Michelle McDonald motioned to approve the September minutes as written. Beverly Strongitharm made a second motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Signage Requests

- a. 513 Spear Ave. – This request was approved at the September meeting.
- b. 2319 W. 3rd Street – This request was assigned to Derek Uttley who was not present at the meeting. Erica Erickson will call Derek and follow up.

3. Action & Advocacy Reports

- a. Taxi Task Force – No new updates since last month’s meeting.
- b. Accessibility Code – Bob Grytdahl provided Commission members with contact information for the Great Lakes ADA Center. This organization provides information about the ADA and should be called when there are questions about anything related to the ADA, such as compliance with accessibility requirements. The Great Lakes ADA contact information is attached to these minutes.
- c. Parks & Recreation – Erica Erickson provided a report on the September meeting of the Parks and Rec Commission. A community member contacted the Commission on Disabilities regarding the location of accessible playground equipment at the various parks in the City of Duluth. The person wanted to know where children in wheelchairs can go and use playground equipment and if there are any wheelchair swings at the Duluth Parks. Erica presented these questions to the Parks Commission. The staff from the Parks and Recreation Department stated that it would be a great project this winter for a student intern to do a complete inventory of the accessible playground equipment at all the Duluth Parks. The intern will complete an inventory listing the location and type of all accessible equipment at the Duluth Parks and this information will then be made available on the Duluth Parks website. Additionally, the Parks Commission recommended that accessible signs be posted at the parks indicating which equipment was accessible and with some type of instructions so people can understand how to use

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- the equipment. Information and instructions should also be posted online with the inventory, with pictures. It is also essential to ensure that accessible paths with the proper surface are present so people can navigate the parks and get to the accessible equipment.
- d. Tourism Task Force – Erica Erickson presented her revised letter to be sent to area tourism representatives encouraging them to make events and attractions accessible to people with disabilities and offering the assistance of the Commission on Disabilities to help with these issues. Bob Grytdahl will put this letter on official City of Duluth Commission on Disabilities letterhead and will send it out to people involved in tourism sector in Duluth. Commissioners are encouraged to email Bob the names and contact information of people they would like to send the letter to.
4. St. Louis County Health & Human Services Conference – The Commission will not be participating in this year’s conference. We would like to be present at the 2014 St. Louis County Health & Human Services Conference with both a table and also by giving a presentation. Amy Hill, Amber Madoll, Gerald Salveson, and Michelle McDonald expressed interest in planning and participating in next year’s conference. We will revisit this topic at next month’s meeting and Commissioners are encouraged to brain storm ideas for possible presentation topics.
5. Public Comment
Bob Grytdahl brought the issue of homelessness and recent discussion about possible action regarding those living under the overpass in the “Graffiti Graveyard” to the attention of the Commission. It was noted that many homeless people have mental health conditions and other disabilities. There is an extreme shortage of affordable rental housing in Duluth and about a nine month wait to get into low-income housing. There is a segment of the homeless population that likely would not choose to move into housing if it did become available, so the City needs to find ways to continually manage the issue because it is not a problem with a permanent solution. Bob Grytdahl is going to contact representatives from CHUM, HDC, and Loaves & Fishes and invite them to our November meeting to provide the Commission with information regarding this issue and how it impacts people with disabilities. This will help the Commission meet its goal to make recommendations to the City Council regarding how to take action on issues affecting people with disabilities. Moving forward, the Commission is going to try to invite guest speakers on topics impacting people with disabilities to each month’s meeting.
6. Other Business
None

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7. Announcements

Gerald Salveson announced that “Noteworthy Kids” is having a fund-raiser at Clyde Iron on October 22 at 7:30 p.m. in order to raise money to help provide music lessons to children who cannot afford them. Randy Lee’s Jazz Band will be performing at the event.

The next Commission on Disabilities meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 6, 2013, at 3:00 p.m. at City Hall, Room 303.

Respectfully submitted,

Erica M. Erickson
Chair

EE:jm